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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 000572

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/11/2013

TAGS: [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [PREL](#) [IT](#) [IRAQI](#) [FREEDOM](#)

SUBJECT: ITALY READY TO SEND LNO AS COORDINATOR

REF: SECDEF MSG 100823Z FEB 03

CLASSIFIED BY: A/DCM SCOTT KILNER FOR REASONS 1.5(B)(D)

1. (U) THIS IS AN ACTION REQUEST. SEE PARAGRAPH 4.

2. (C) IN A FEBRUARY 12 MEETING, THE AMBASSADOR URGED ITALIAN DEFENSE MINISTER MARTINO TO SEND A LIAISON OFFICER FOR IRAQ TO TAMPA AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, PER OUR REPEATED REQUESTS. MARTINO TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT HE IS EAGER TO SEND AN OFFICER TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CENTCOM PLANNING ACTIVITIES BUT SAID HE NEEDS AN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION HE RAISED WITH SECRETARY RUMSFELD ON FEBRUARY 7 (REFTEL). SINCE HE WILL HAVE TO INFORM PARLIAMENT THAT AN LNO FOR IRAQ HAS BEEN DISPATCHED, HE NEEDS TO KNOW IF HE CAN DESCRIBE THE LNO'S FUNCTION AS THAT OF COORDINATING DECISIONS ALREADY APPROVED BY THE GOI, MARTINO EXPLAINED.

3. (C) THE AMBASSADOR AND POL MINISTER COUNSELOR AGREED THAT THIS SEEMED A GOOD APPROACH, ALTHOUGH IT LEFT OPEN THE POSSIBILITY THAT GERMANY, WHICH IS ALSO FACILITATING OVERFLIGHT AND TRANSIT REQUESTS, WOULD ASK FOR A SIMILAR ARRANGEMENT AT CENTCOM. MARTINO TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT IF THE USG ACCEPTED THIS APPROACH, THE ITALIAN LNO COULD BE ON HIS WAY TO TAMPA BY FRIDAY.

4. (C) ACTION REQUEST. THE AMBASSADOR TOLD MARTINO HE WOULD HAVE A RESPONSE BY THE NEXT MORNING. EMBASSY REQUESTS WASHINGTON CONFIRMATION THAT WE CAN NOTIFY MARTINO AT OOB (ROME TIME) ON FEBRUARY 13 THAT THE USG HAS NO OBJECTION IF MARTINO INFORMS PARLIAMENT THAT AN LNO HAS BEEN DISPATCHED TO CENTCOM TO COORDINATE DECISIONS THE GOI HAS ALREADY APPROVED RELATING TO IRAQ CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS. END ACTION REQUEST. SEMBLER

2003ROME00572 - Classification: CONFIDENTIAL